

The Brethren Evangelist

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT
The Brethren Publishing House,
ASHLAND, OHIO.

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Terms of Subscription.

One Copy one year, 1.50
One Copy six months, .75
One Copy four months, .50

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ADDRESS,
THE BRETHREN PUB. HOUSE,
ASHLAND, Ashland Co., OHIO

ASHLAND, O., July 13, 1887.

DEAR EVANGELIST.—The change of the contemplated convention from Milford to Ashland, for consideration named in the call of the sub-committee, meets my hearty approval. Now let the church be fully represented when the convention meets, and may all work together for the glory of God.

JOHN NICHOLSON.

Some Things to Remember.

As the work of a general conference is now under consideration, it would be well for every one who contemplates taking a part in the discussions preceding it, or the meeting itself, to remember from whence we are. We must recognize the stern fact that we are not homogeneous as a religious organization at this time. Only a few years have elapsed since there was a falling together of several little organizations of Christian people. Each one of these elements have come boldly out on the Gospel stand, and that too, against the fusillade of slander and persecution. They have stood in the battle as soldiers brave and true, and these are the last ones of the Lord's army to submit to dictation of any kind. Some of these left the German Baptist church of their own free will, and to undertake to say they must or must not do this or that, when the Gospel does not plainly teach the same, will be a grievous blunder. Those who have come out and so bravely stood up for their rights will still stand.

It should be remembered also that there are many elements in the Brethren Church. It is composed of persons who have been brought up under Episcopal influences, Baptist influences, Evangelical, Methodist, and others, and each one carries an individuality of his own. Even several of these elements are frequently found in one church. To unite these in a single band of harmonious workers requires patience, prudence, the love of God, grace and prayer. These alone insure success in the work. This should not be forgotten.

The brethren who were old when this reformation was commenced are no younger now. Their heads are whiter than they ever were before, and in a few years more they will be unable to work in the Lord's harvest as they have hitherto. Several of these faithful brethren have no property worth while, and when they are no longer able to preach, they will have no source of income. These old fathers are a little delicate about commencing

a movement to provide for them a home and support when they are no longer able to do this by their daily labors. Therefore it is the duty of the young ministers of the church to commence, at the September conference, to do this. It is a black reproach upon Christ and his cause to allow his faithful servants to suffer in poverty, after they have denied themselves the luxuries of life, freedom in society associations, and spent their energy and strength in the work. Every man who enters into the ministry should have a strong assurance that should he abandon all earthly concerns, that he will be taken care of when he is no longer able to labor, and not be kicked out as a nuisance and a pauper. God makes but few men of many talents, and there is only one good preacher in a thousand who is a success as a money-keeper. And then a preacher can not have wealth and escape condemnation. As long as he has a little money, he is expected to preach for nothing, pay the lion's share of the expenses of the church, feed the poor, and stand up as an example of liberality on all occasions.

We want to organize a Ministerial Aid Association under the patronage of the National Conference, adopt a constitution and then join ourselves to it, and solicit in its behalf. This is a theme that such brethren as Cober, Perry, Ditch, Knepper, Kimmel, Stahl, Bowman, and other young ministers should take up. Fellow-laborers, commence at once and write out a constitution for such a society.

Another work that the National Conference should commence is an Orphan's Home. This is one of the most worthy of Christian works and no time should be lost in starting a movement in that direction. This will also need a constitution, and brethren can exercise their wisdom, intelligence and statesmanship on that.

Of course there will be those who will laugh at these ideas, and point to our slowness in handling the College burden. There are always men who want to be smart in sitting down on good works; but let the worker remember that nothing is ever accomplished by making no start. If there is a lack of money now, it may not always be so, and if these needed works are commenced now, we will be that much ahead when money is at command.

Another good work that the National Conference should commence is the organization of a General Church Building Association. The writer of this article would like to be one of an Association of two thousand persons, each one of whom will pledge themselves to pay 25 cts. for each of ten churches or less, built under its auspices in acceptable locations in the United States every year, the money to be paid in one installment, to a treasurer of said association. Here is the principle, and who will take hold of it and write out a constitution for consideration at the coming conference? This is a glorious line, and such brethren as Holsinger, Beer and Bashor should take it up.

The National Mission Board has already been discussed, and should not be forgotten. The way to get any of these works in

a presentable shape is to write constitutions. Any man who will write a set of rules will strike something that will be acceptable and will furnish a rough stone which can be dressed for the purpose it is intended.

These are a few things that should be considered and acted upon. As space is limited, we stop for this time.

Peter Waldus.

Church History furnishes few more interesting narratives than the religious career of Peter Waldus, and few conversions more marked.

About the year 1160, a few distinguished citizens were talking together about various topics, as the custom then was in Southern France and Northern Italy, and one of the number fell and immediately expired. One of the number was Peter Waldus, a man of remarkable wealth. The death of his friend greatly impressed his mind with the uncertainty of life and led him into serious contemplation about the condition of his own soul and the duties that he owed to God. His meditations were accompanied by God's holy spirit, and he at last resolved to repent and be more diligent toward God than he had been before. He commenced at once to distribute alms among the needy, to admonish his own household and those also who came to him for help. Thus having done good for a long time to the poor, he became more zealous of learning and instructing; and the people continued to gather before him in increased numbers, and he presented to them, not his own views, but the holy scriptures, interpreting it, and illustrating divine truth, as God gave him wisdom and understanding.

Once initiated in this work, his knowledge increased and his influence broadened until the whole city in which he lived and the country around was aroused by his preaching.

Before he commenced his holy work he engaged men to write the scriptures in his native tongue. One was a man of some learning and the other a good writer. The first one was to dictate, and the other to write. He also had them to compile sayings of the church fathers on matters of faith and practice. He finally became so earnest in his religious work that he sold his property and devoted all the proceeds to multiplying Bibles in the common language and aiding the poor.

His success as a religious teacher aroused the jealousy and antagonism of the papists of his city, and although it was not his intention at that time to form a separate church, he was persecuted, and then commenced that reign of terror which has made his name famous in history. He was strictly forbidden to teach the scriptures any longer. But, like Peter of old, he thought it was better to obey God than man and he continued his work. He was driven from his native city and all his followers with him. But wherever they went they preached the gospel, and the seed of the reformation was sown in all parts of the adjacent country. It was a repetition of the first propagation of Christianity. The advocates were driven hither and thither by

the persecuting hand, and wherever they went, they were as fire brands in a country suffering with drouth, wherever they touched a fire was lit and it began to consume the ecclesiastical fodder of the popes, and leave the essence of a healthy religion.

Peter Waldus organized a pure Bible church. Never was a church more thoroughly scriptural in this respect. The Scriptures was his only rule of faith and practice. Yet he did not hesitate to formulate a creed, or in other words, to write out a summary of his belief and practice.

He was under the guiding hand of God, and the morning star of the Reformation, and in him was found a man who was guided by divine influences. His history is interesting to show how little God cares for ordinations, titles and such like. He commenced to preach without any authority delegated to him by man; he continued to preach without any authority farther than the workings of his own conscience, and he preached, notwithstanding the threats of the popes, and that without election or ordination.

His record is before us, but his soul is at rest in the arms of Jesus.

A Voluntary Humility.

The scriptures warn the Christian against being beguiled by a voluntary humility. There is probably as much sharp deception practiced through this agency as any other at man's command. The man who wears a habit of devoutness is able to enter into the confidence of pious people readily, and will be held in high esteem until his true nature is discovered. Many of the frauds that are being perpetrated upon innocent people, are made successful by the assistance of a voluntary humility. The actors, being persons without any conscience, there is nothing to check them from personating the pious man to perfection. A thief or robber can appear more devout than the truly devout man does. The latter will be natural while the former, possessing similar talent, uses it with all the ingenuity that he can command.

As there is so much danger of being imposed upon by persons of this character it is prudent to "try the spirit" to see of what sort it is before venturing too far in compliance with the requests that such individuals may make.

"Ye shall know the tree by its fruits," is the scriptural rule of estimating the character of men. Men's fruits are their works in common, every day life, and where a person has no opportunity to see this, he should ask for something equal, or go no farther in his favors than what Christian hospitality and common courtesy require.

The Liberality of God.

The truth is many times pressed upon the mind that if God was as exacting as ecclesiastical leaders, there would be very few of them who would ever get into heaven. There is hardly a religious organization brought to view in history which has not assumed the prerogatives of a law giver in some form or other, and put between men's souls and heaven, that which the Lord has not. They can not

tolerate the idea of teaching men to forsake evil. The rule with many has been to require a condition of perfectness at the commencement, instead of expecting a growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

EDITORIAL ITEMS.

Some of the brethren are talking about the advantage of having the "spirit" of each paper in the short items. Well, this will be easy to supply. It encourages the habit of abandoning the paper after they are perused, but if "brevity must be the spice of life," in this, we can furnish the spice.

Bro. Mason returned from his visit to Meyersdale and Berlin, Pa., last week highly gratified. The brethren down there treated him so well that he cannot cease to speak about them. We are afraid that he has contracted a Pennsylvania fever, and will be wanting to go back now and then.

Seventy-eight years have passed over brother Geo. Wolfe, of California. Age with a record of a faithful fight for the gospel of Christ, as can be said of this brother, are as a blending of gold and rubies. May he be blessed with a strong consolation and a joyous hope, as the shadow of death gradually draws over him and the sleep in Jesus comes on.

A Pleasant Hill, O., correspondent tells us: "Brother Kilhefner was with us last Saturday evening and Sunday. He gave us some very plain talk,—some of it was too plain for some of the German Baptists. One of their preachers said in his sermon this morning, he would as soon have his children hear an infidel preach, as some of the preachers that preach baptism in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and they being so proud. My prayer is that God will have mercy on such ministers. He said he would not name any denomination. He also said some one handed him one of our papers that had so many accessions; he said it was very easy to make figures. Bro. Kilhefner said in his sermon something about one of their members slipping into saloons by the back way. That happened while he was among them, and I suppose that is what hurts them."

That is right brethren, preach the truth, denounce wrongdoing, and although the enemies of truth may fume and fret, we will be putting ourselves on record with truth.

Bro. David Shindel, of Funkstown, Md., died on the 4th of July, aged 70 years. His obituary will be published next week. He was highly esteemed.

The Pleasant Hill, O., Sunday School will have a picnic at Ludlow Falls, on the 23rd of July. The Farmersville, Lexington, Winchester, Bear Creek and Dayton Churches are cordially invited to bring their little folks along. A very pleasant and profitable time is anticipated.

Bro. W. C. Perry and wife expect to leave this week to spend a few weeks in Indiana, at their old homes. Brother Perry is now preparing himself to devote all his time to preaching. It is with much reluctance that we accept this decision of his, and are slow to pay him the respect that is due; but duty impels us. Amidst many annoyances that will arise from the relation that we sustain to one another and the school work here, it is so seldom that a person can be found with a temperment and disposition so forbearing and impartial and a character so perfect, that he will maintain his equilibrium and temper indefinitely, and when one does happen to drop down amongst us, we are grieved to part with him,—and if we had the money we wouldn't.

We want to say that brother Perry is an exceptional young man and Christian in all that goes to fill the measure of these characters. And now as he is a candidate for a Pastorate, we recommend him to any church who wants in a Pastor virtue, religion, piety, devotedness, temperance, industry, ability, patience, mildness of temperment and endurance in good works. We make this strong because we feel so. But should any church engage him, do not expect, when he comes, to see a spread-eagle snob or broad-winged sensationalist. His sermons will be good, but not striking, and if you are children of the Lord, they will become better as you go; but he will make a poor companion of devils, whether in the church or out.

His address is Ashland, Ohio.

It seems like a new thing to hear of a superintendent of a Sabbath school